

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA ADVISORY

WHAT: Virginia Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery Conference

WHEN: February 16, 2005, beginning at 9:00 a.m. (registration and breakfast begins at 8:30 a.m.)

WHERE: The Place at Innsbrook 4036 Cox Road, Richmond, Virginia

WHO: Statewide media outlets

WHY: The Virginia Department of Health is supporting a conference on human trafficking being hosted by the Virginia Department of Social Services Office of Newcomer Services, and Commonwealth Catholic Charities. Human trafficking is a crime which subjects people to force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of forced labor or sexual exploitation. Law enforcement professionals, social workers, and health care personnel are expected to attend the conference which will provide tips for identifying and helping victims of human trafficking.

Among the many consequences of human trafficking is the risk of spreading communicable diseases. Most victims' health issues are not treated in their early stages, but are neglected until they become chronic, critical or even life-endangering situations. To lessen some of this impact, VDH provides health screenings for tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases, and offers immunizations and other critical services to protect the health of these individuals and all of the citizens of the Commonwealth. Additionally, VDH strongly encourages health professionals to report signs of victimization to law enforcement officials.

For more information about human trafficking, log onto the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families Web site at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/>

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